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ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

1955

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Town Hall,
ROYSTON,
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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

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Councillor H. G. Haddock,
Chairman of the Public Health Committee

Dr. V. R. Walker, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.,
District Medical Officer of Health

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ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1955 - 1956

COUNCILLORS:

A. L. CAIN, J.P., A.I.E.E.
Chairman of the Council.

F. J. DRAKE, A.M.I.E.E.
Vice-Chairman.

Chairman - Public Health Committee - H. G. Haddock

R. H. C. Clark, C.C. Lady Newman

W. S. Keatley P. F. Sewell

Mrs. E. A. King, J.P. H. A. Stearn, J.P., M.P.S.

G. W. Langridge W. A. Turner

R. L. Wilkerson

OFFICERS:

Dr. V. R. WALKER, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.
District Medical Officer of Health.

S. M. JACKSON, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.,
Surveyor and Senior Sanitary Inspector.

E. R. SWIFT, S.I.E.J.B.,
Additional Sanitary Inspector. (from September 1955).

S. P. WALTON, F.C.I.S.,
Clerk and Chief Financial Officer.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Royston Urban District Council

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In accordance with Ministry of Health Circular 17/55, I have pleasure in presenting my Annual Report of the year 1955.

During the year the local birth rate (15.6) was again above that for England and Wales.

The local death rate (11.5) was this year just below the National rate, and application of the comparability factor (0.81) supplied gave a standardised death rate of 9.3. The local still birth rate was nil and the infant mortality rate approximated to the record low National rate for the year.

There was again during the year a marked absence of serious infectious disease from the District.

I would acknowledge the assistance in the preparation of this Report from Mr. S.M.Jackson, your Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector, who is responsible for the sections on Sanitary matters. Also I would like to thank your Council and its Chief Officers for every consideration during the year.

I am, ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

VICTOR R. WALKER.

July, 1956. Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A LOCAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	1,626
Home Population - Registrar General's Estimate for mid-1955	5,120
Number of inhabited houses at 1st April, 1955 (estimated) ...	1,551
Rateable Value (1st April, 1955.)	£34,072
Sum represented by Penny Rate	£138.14.8d.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the year 1955.

		Totals	M.	F.	Royston Urban District.	Comparable rates for England & Wales.
LIVE BIRTHS.	legitimate	77	46	31		
	Illegitimate	3	2	1		
	Total	80	48	32		
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population					15.6	15.0
		Totals	M.	F.		
STILLBIRTHS.	Legitimate	-	-	-		
	Illegitimate	-	-	-		
	Total	-	-	-		
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births					Nil	23.1
		Totals	M.	F.		
DEATHS		59	34	25		
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population					11.5	11.7

DEATH RATES OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE

All infants per 1,000 live births	25.0	24.9
Rate for legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births	26.0	
Rate for illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births	Nil	

Actual number of such deaths: (a) Under 4 weeks and (b) Under 1 year

	Under 4 weeks	Under 1 year
Legitimate	1	2
Illegitimate	-	-
	1	2

Deaths from pregnancy childbirth or abortion	0
Death from Cancer (all sites)	8
Deaths from Measles	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough	0
Deaths from other infective and parasitic diseases	0

Comment on Vital Statistics.

Estimated mid-year home population shows a considerable increase (300) on the figure for 1954. Live Births (80) were 4 less and local deaths (59) 8 less than for 1954.

SECTION B Provision of Health Services for the area.

No important change took place during the year.

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supply

The whole of the district, with the exception of 8 houses and a small light engineering works in the Eagle Tavern Area, and the Hall, Farm and Cottages on the Burloes Estate, is supplied with water from the chalk, by the Royston Water Company Ltd., by a piped supply of excellent quality. The houses at Burloes are supplied by a private piped supply, also of excellent quality.

The difficulties of providing a piped water supply to the Eagle Tavern area were not resolved, and again, as in previous years, water was carted to the premises in this district during dry spells.

With the exception of the houses mentioned above, all the other houses in the district are supplied with water direct from the mains to the houses.

Bacteriological and chemical examinations were made during the year and analysis shows the water to be in a satisfactory chemical and bacteriological condition and suitable for drinking.

Restrictions on the use of water by hose for garden or car washing purposes were imposed by the Water Company in the summer and remained in force to the end of the year. The supply to domestic and other premises was however, maintained.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

Twelve new houses built by private enterprise, and 54 new houses built by the Council were connected to the sewage system during the year.

A new sewer was laid in Garden Walk to serve existing houses at present on cesspool drainage and to provide for further private development which was taking place. This sewer was 469 yards in length, 186 yards being in 9" diameter earthenware pipe and 283 yards in 6" diameter pipe, with manholes, and other incidental works.

Refuse Removal and Disposal.

The cost of refuse removal for the year amounted to £2,145.

Maintenance of the refuse tip was continued and advantage was taken to seal the tipping area whenever covering material was available. Treatment by spraying with insecticide was carried out to prevent the breeding of flies.

Regular baiting and poisoning treatments against rat infestation was carried out during the year by the Rodent Operator of the Joint Scheme.

RODENT CONTROL.

The operation of the Joint Pest Control Scheme with the Hitchin and Welwyn Rural District Councils showed that useful work was carried out, and in Royston the Rodent Operator's work covered the following:-

Total hours worked on treatments - 188¼

The time spent on the various types of premises were:-

Sewers 45½ hours, Refuse Tips etc. 70¾ hours, Private dwellings 49½ hours, Business Premises 5½ hours, Block Inspections 4 hours, Inspection of Agricultural land 13 hours.

The total number of inspections made during 1955 as a result of notification or otherwise was 398.

The scheme has worked smoothly, and I would like to record my appreciation of the work of the Senior Sanitary Inspector of the Hitchin Rural District Council, who has been in control of the scheme and acted as co-ordinating officer.

Sanitary Inspections of the Area.

The details below show the number of inspections made during the year:-

Under the Housing Acts	56
Under the Public Health Acts	174
Under the Factory Acts	26
Prevention of Infectious Diseases	3

Milk and Dairies Orders	4
Food Shops and Stores	69
Bakehouse Inspections	6
Prevention of Nuisances	124
House Drainage	38
Supervision of Refuse Collection and disposal	94
Rats and Mice Destruction	398
Caravans and Moveable Dwellings	46
Miscellaneous Inspections	90

Details resulting from the above inspections are as follows:-

Statutory Notices served	10
Informal Notices served	92
Notices Complied with	104
Houses demolished (Sec.11)	2
Undertakings given by owners under Sec. 11	-
Houses rendered fit as result of formal action	10
Houses rendered fit as result of informal action	97
House roofs renewed or repaired	16
House windows repaired	21
House chimneys repaired	14
House floors renewed or repaired	28
House ceilings renewed or repaired	19
House walls (external) repaired or plastered	29
House eaves gutters renewed or repaired	38
Internal wall plaster repaired	29
House drains relaid or repaired	114 yds.
Gullies fixed	9
Intercepting traps fixed	3
New sinks fixed	12
Sinks renewed or repaired	6
Sink waste pipes renewed or repaired	21
W.C. roofs repaired	8
W.C. Pans renewed or repaired	14
W.C. Cisterns renewed or repaired	84
New baths fixed	5
Inspection chambers built	8
Inspection chambers repaired	4
New vent shafts fixed	4
New F.A.I. fixed	10
Water Service pipes repaired	64
Dampness remedied	14
Cooking ranges renewed or repaired	21
Hot Water systems renewed or repaired	2
Staircases repaired	3
Blocked drains cleared and cleansed	51

Accumulations or rubbish removed	22
Houses disinfected	4
Bakehouse floors cleansed	2
Dairies cleansed and limewashed	2
Bakehouse ceilings cleansed	2
Sanitary conveniences at Factories repaired	1
Sanitary conveniences at Factories cleansed	4
Sanitary conveniences provided at Building sites	2

Building Byelaws and Town and Country Planning.

Plans and applications submitted	86
Plans and applications approved	78
Plans and applications disapproved	8
Approved for new houses	14
Approved for other buildings	44
Approved for change of user	4
Approved for advertisement signs	4
Approved for use of land	7
New houses completed:	
By local authority under Housing Acts	54
By private enterprise	12
Other buildings completed	41
Drains laid to above	2,175 yds.
Gullies laid to above	136
Connections to sewer	34
Vent shafts fixed	74
Inspection of Chambers built	109
Water closets fixed	89
Intercepting traps fixed	34
Baths fixed	66
Sinks fixed	70
Lavatory basins fixed	74
Dustbins provided	83

SECTION D.

Housing

During the year 54 new traditional brick houses were completed under the Council's Housing Programme and became occupied. Of these, 35 houses were of the 3 bedroom type, 13 houses of the 2 bedroom type, and 6 were one bedroomed bungalows or flats for old people.

Twelve new dwellings were erected by private enterprise.

In the early part of the year, the families occupying the three family units of accommodation at Old Bank House were re housed in Council houses, and the property was released.

No other requisitioned property was held by the Council.

The number of properties for which Improvement Grants were approved during the year was 11.

During the year a return was made to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954.

This return gave figures of the estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation within the meaning of Section 9 of the Act, and considered to be suitable to be dealt with under the headings of Clearance or Demolition Orders. The period which it was considered necessary for securing the demolition of all the houses was given as 5 years.

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

There are three milk producers in the district, two of whom are licensed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for the production of Tuberculin Tested Milk.

There are two retail purveyors of milk in the district.

Periodic inspections of farms and dairies were made during the year.

The Council's area is part of the Specified Areas Scheme which requires that only milk of the Tuberculin Tested or Pasteurised types should be offered for sale.

Two Dealer's Licences were issued in respect of the sale of designated milks and three Supplementary Licences were issued for the retailing of designated milks in the district from premises situated outside the Urban Area.

Meat.

There are no slaughterhouses in the district and no slaughtering of animals was carried on in the district during the year.

Meat in butchers shops and fish in fishmongers, has been inspected and the following certified as unfit for human consumption:-

Pork - 25lbs. Beef - 122lbs.

Other Foods.

Meat and other food shops were visited and the following were found to be unfit for human consumption on examination and were surrendered and destroyed:-

Pork Pies	-	24
Cheese	-	15lbs.
Cod Fillets	-	4stone.
Canadian Wheat Flour	-	4,495lbs.

Tinned and Packaged Food.

Oranges	5	tins
Pineapple	7	"
Peaches	18	"
Plums	2	"
Tomatoes	48	"
Apricots	11	"
Pears	4	"
Jams	4	"
Strawberries	2	"
Orange Juice	2	"
Peas	30	"
Beans	3	"
Luncheon Meat	4	"
Corned Beef	39	"
Stewed Steak	13	"
Salmon	6	"
Pilchards	3	"
Soups	2	"
Condensed Milk	2	"
Evaporated Milk	12	"
Cream	2	"
Ham Loaf	2	"
Minced Meat	2	"
Onions	2	"

Food Poisoning Outbreaks.

No intimation of any occurrence of food poisoning was received during the year.

Green Plunge Swimming Pool.

Samples of water were taken from the above and the results of analysis showed the water in the pool to be suitable for bathing purposes throughout the season during which the pool was open.

Factories Act, 1937.

The following table gives the information required by the Ministry of Labour and National Service in accordance with Form 572 (Revised).

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by the Sanitary Inspector).

Premises	Number of			
	No. on Register	Inspect-ions.	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
I. Factories in which Secs. 1,2,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	9	12	-	-
II. Factories not included in (I) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by Local Authority	30	12	-	-
III. Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by Local Authority (excl. outworkers).	2	2	-	-
Total	41	26	-	-

2. Cases in which defects were found.

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				
	Found	Remedied	Referred		No. of prosecutions
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of Cleanliness	10	10	-	-	-
Overcrowding	Nil	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temp.	Nil	-	-	-	-
Inadequate vent,	Nil	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	Nil	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences. (a) Insufficient	Nil	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	Nil	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act	Nil	-	-	-	-
Total	11	11	-	-	-

SECTION F.

Prevalence of, and control over, infectious and other diseases.

Notifications of acute infectious disease were confined to four cases of acute pneumonia in the first two quarters and one case of measles in the third quarter. Royston is therefore seen to have escaped, due to its somewhat isolated geographical position and self-contained school population, the widespread epidemic of measles in the summer of 1955. Due to the same factors the childhood infections - of measles or whooping cough - tend locally be to more epidemic from their infrequency. The last local outbreak of measles occurred in the first quarter of 1953.

Diphtheria was again absent from the district during the year. Despite continued rarity of this formerly dreaded disease the offer of infant protection by immunisation continues to be accepted by a good proportion of parents. For children under two years combined protection against diphtheria and whooping cough is now available from Welfare Centres and Medical Practitioners.

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TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Deaths during the year 1955.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 - 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 35	1(1)	2(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 45	~~1~~	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 - 65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
& Over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	~~2~~ 1(1)	2(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deaths allocated by Registrar General after final transfers					-	-	-	-

Foot Note: Figures of new cases include inward transfers from other areas, the numbers of such being shown additionally in brackets.

Comment: Only one new notification is shown from the local population (an adult female case of respiratory disease) with 2 inward transfers; no death from tuberculosis was recorded during the year.

VICTOR R. WALKER.

July, 1956. District Medical Officer of Health.

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